LOVE in a VILLAGE.

Westall del. *Thornthwaite Sc*

Mrs BILLINGTON in ROSETTA.

London: Printed for John Bell, British Library, Strand, Sep. 28. 1790

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

A COMIC OPERA.

AS PERFORMED

AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

WRITTEN FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Managers.

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

John Bell, British Library, Strand,

Printer to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCII.

LOVE in a VILLAGE.

Westall de

Printed for John Bell, British Library, Strand, Sep. 28. 1790

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

A

COMIC OPERA.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC XCI.

GONE MAD

TO

MR. BEARD.

SIR,

IT is with great pleasure I embrace this opportunity to acknowledge the favors I have received from you. Among others, I would mention in particular, the warmth with which you espoused this piece in its passage to the stage; but I am afraid it would be thought a compliment to your good-nature, too much at the expence of your judgment.

If what I now venture to lay before the public, is considered merely as a piece of dramatic writing, it will certainly be found to have very little merit: in that light no one can think more indifferently of it than I do myself; but I believe I may venture to assert, on your opinion, that some of the songs are tolerable; that the music is more pleasing than has hitherto appeared in compositions of this kind; and the words better adapted, considering the nature of the airs, which are not common ballads, than could be expected, supposing any degree of poetry to be preserved in the versification.

More than this, few people expect in an Opera: and if some of the severer critics should be inclined to blame your indulgence to one of the first attempts of a young writer, I am persuaded the public in general will applaud your endeavour to provide them with something new, in a species of entertainment in which the performers at your theatre so eminently excel.

You may perceive, Sir, that I yield a punctual observance to the injunctions you laid upon me, when I threatened you with this address, and make it rather a preface than a dedication: and yet I must confess I can hardly reconcile those formalities which render it indelicate to pay praises where all the world allows them to be due; nor can I easily conceive why a man should be so studious to deserve what he does not desire: but since you will not allow me to offer any panegyric to you, I must hasten to bestow one upon myself, and let the public know (which was my chief design in this introduction) that I have the happiness to be.

SIR,

Your most obliged,

and most obedient servant.

The AUTHOR.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

COMPILED from the VILLAGE OPERA of Charles Johnson—and this musical Entertainment first appeared at Covent-Garden Theatre in 1763. Its success was nearly equal to that prodigy of fortune, the Beggar's Opera.

This piece is founded upon RURAL LIFE, and rural unacquaintance with the depravity of a metropolis. The characters are naturally drawn—the incidents have sufficient probability—It had the benefit of much delightful music from the composer, and the sweetest voices on the English stage have graced it by singing the airs of ROSSETTA, Young MEADOWS, and HAWTHORN.

Mrs. BILLINGTON in this Opera, as in every other we listen to her in, throws the powers of her predecessors at an immeasurable distance: her *tone*, her *taste*, and musical *science*, are the pride of the British Opera.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS - - -	Mr. Aickin.
Young MEADOWS - - - -	Mr. Kelly.
Justice WOODCOCK - - - -	Mr. Parsons.
HAWTHORNE - - - - -	Mr. Dignum.
EUSTACE - - - - - -	Mr. Williames.
HODGE - - - - - -	Mr. Hollingsworth.

Women.

ROSSETTA - - - - - -	Mrs. Crouch.
LUCINDA - - - - - -	Miss Stageldoir.
DEBORAH WOODCOCK - - -	Mrs. Love.
MARGERY - - - -	Mrs. Collett.

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS - -	Mr. Powell.
Young MEADOWS - -	Mr. Johnstone.
Justice WOODCOCK, - - -	Mr. Quick.
HAWTHORNE - - -	Mr. Bannister.
EUSTACE - - -	Mr. Davis.
HODGE - - -	Mr. Blanchard.

Women.

ROSSETTA - - -	Mrs. Billington.
LUCINDA - - -	Mrs. Mountain.
DEBORAH WOODCOCK - -	Mrs. Pitt.
MARGERY - - -	Mrs. Wells.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A garden with statues, fountains, and flower-pots. Several Arbours appear in the side scenes: ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA *are discovered at work, seated upon two garden-chairs.*

AIR.

Ros. *HOPE! thou nurse of young desire,*
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy:

Luc. *Hope! thou earnest of delight,*
Softest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find:

Both. *Kind deceiver, flatter still,*
Deal out pleasures unpossest,
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.

Luc. Heigho!—*Rossetta?*

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a village a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a super-annuated maiden aunt.—I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this Mr. Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes you, you like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid:
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope;

Resist and be free,
Run riot like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it—I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Luc. Never in his life, my dear; and, I am confident, he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that—But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know, what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay, I'll assure you he hath been a wag in his time—you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage——You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.

Let parent's rule, cry nature's laws;
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Luc. Well, but my dear mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me—Was your father to go to London; meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Luc. Why I should think it a little hard, I confess

—yet, when I see you in the character of a chamber-maid— 87

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him? 101

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers, since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter, I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rossetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He's a pretty young man, and the servants say, he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Rossetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush? I am sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done—— But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR.

When once Love's subtile poison gains
A passage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's possest:

To heal the pangs our minds endure,
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes.

SCENE II.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning [*taking out a pocket book*] I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's, which fitted me, by way of a disguise: so says my pocket-book; and, chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the book, and takes up a watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered, as if I changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows—But that's impossible. 163

AIR.

O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain;
In fair Rossetta's *sight to feed*
My sheep upon the plain;
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know?
Ye envious pow'rs! why have ye plac'd 170
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I past by that arbour! Was it not she sat reading there! the trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken —Here she comes.

SCENE III.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself— Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

Y. Mea. I am determined I won't speak to her [*turning to a rose-tree, and plucking the flowers.*] Now or never is the time to conquer myself: besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me: and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what

LOVE in a VILLAGE.

Will you accept of them for yourself then.

Act I. Scene 3.

Wheatley delin. *Grignion sculp.*

London Printed for J. Bell British Library Strand Jan.ʳʸ 6.th 1791.

can never happen. [*hums a tune.*] Those roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me—but better, I'll be as indifferent as he is—I wish that poor lad likes me; and if I was to get encouragement, I suppose [illegible] would be buying a ring, and [illegible] Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought.

Y. Mea. Hah, going without a word! is he gone—I can't bear that—Mrs. Rosetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them as from you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my flower-pots are full.

Y. Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray let go my hand.

Y. Mea. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you shan't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I declare, Mr. Thomas—

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere,
Speak not what I must not hear:
To my heart its ease restore,
Go, and never see me more.

by delin.

Original sc.

London Printed for I. Bell. British Library Strand Jan.ʸ 6.th 1791.

can never happen. [*hums a tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of, would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought. 191

Y. Mea. Hah, going without a word! a look! —I can't bear that—Mrs. Rossetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Y. Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray let go my hand.

Y. Mea. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you shan't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas—

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere;
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more.

SCENE IV.

YOUNG MEADOWS.

This girl is a riddle—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my passion for her, grow every day more and more violent—Well, would I marry her?—would I make a mistress of her if I could?—Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now, prepar'd with scorn to treat her,
Ev'ry charm in thought I brave,
Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
And confess myself a slave.

SCENE V.

A hall in Justice WOODCOCK's *house. Enter* HAWTHORN, *with a fowling-piece in his hands, and a net with birds at his girdle: and, afterwards, Justice* WOODCOCK.

AIR.

There was a jolly miller once,
Liv'd on the river Dee;
He work'd and sung, from morn till night;
No lark more blythe than he.
And this the burthen of his song,
For ever us'd to be,——
I care for nobody, not I,
If no one cares for me. 240

House, here, house! what all gadding, all abroad! house, I say, hilli-ho, ho!

J. Wood. Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing! [*Entering*] Oh, master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such mad cap—Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and, if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time: but you have got the lazy unwholesome London fashion, of lying a bed in a

morning, and there's gout for you—Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up business.

J. Wood. Well but, master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What, when I maintain the contrary?——— Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hale cobler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate
From pleasure to pleasure they run:

Well, who cares a jot,
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light:
The blisses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

SCENE VI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

J. Wood. Call, sir; where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but I suppose, I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks here-about out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fidlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now, this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorised already; for by an act passed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor———

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you, this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords;—and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich. 319

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need neither fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.

The greatness that would make us grave
Is but an empty thing;
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The chearful man's a king.

SCENE VII.

LUCINDA, HODGE.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been, ay I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i'th'hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and, would you think it? after walking all that way—de'el from me, if the cross-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough:

and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare. 353

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Aye, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you?—Come, quick—have you e'er a letter? 362

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry [*rummaging his pockets*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh here it is.

Luc. So, give it me. [*reads the letter to herself.*]

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arm achs with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hang'd if I won'na rather ha' thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Luc. Yes—Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before. 380

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Nor for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And Hodge——

AIR.

Hodge. *Well, well, say no more;*
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my teather;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise,
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elfe,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

SCENE VIII.

LUCINDA.

How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry—But perhaps he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, God of soft persuasion,
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those, who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,
Childish mummery at best.
Happy I in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait.

SCENE IX.

A field with a stile. *Enter* HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and, some time after, enter* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you; and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Mar. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well; what sayn you?

Mar. Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all; and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why no I won't, I tell you; I have chang'd my mind.

Mar. Nay but surely, surely—Consider Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Mar. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

Mar. Yes do, speak your worst.

Hodge. Why then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face. 452

Mar. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing, 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's—But I know what makes you false-hearted to me, that you may keep company with young madam's waiting-woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. [*Seeing Young Meadows.*] Oh! master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray did not you go down the village one day last week with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Y. Mea. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Green-man was saying, as how there was a passenger at their house as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Y. Mea. The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it.—Come hither, Hodge.

Mar. A nasty ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have.—Well, well, I

wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days, till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believ'd his flatt'ring tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country.

SCENE X.

A green with the prospect of a village, and the representation of a statute or fair. Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, *Young* MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several country people.*

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a coming.

Countrymen. His worship!

J. Wood. Fye, fye, what a croud's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a fellow*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Haw. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countryman. Why, can you list ma! Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so, I like they should. —Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled. —Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs. Deb. More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussys fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lass [*beck'ning to a country girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chucking her under the chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs. Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go, hussy.

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom!—This is Nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

SCENE XI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and men and women servants.*

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it. 531

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it shan't be our fault. Strike up the Servants Medley.

AIR.

HOUSE-MAID.

I pray ye, gentles, list to me.
I'm young, and strong, and clean you see;

I'll not turn tail to any she,
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

FOOTMAN.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry:
And what tho' here I now appear,
I've serv'd the best of gentry.
A footman would you have
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am:
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet-doux,
With your humble servant, madam.

COOK-MAID.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compar'd to old English roast beef?

CARTER.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,

Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
Ge ho Dobbin, &c.

CHORUS.

My masters and mistresses, hither repair;
What servants you want, you'll find in our fair;
Men and Maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages, we shan't disagree.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK's *House.*

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Lucinda.

WELL, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fye: how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels—

Luc. Oh to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel shew decoys;
Dupes to our folly we are made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure, to be paid
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eust. Yes; but, you dear provoking angel, you have not told me, when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why that, I confess, requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR.

Think, my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings;
Doubting and suspence at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion e'er 'tis lost.

SCENE II.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE, JUSTICE WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but cater-wauling from morning till night, nothing but cater-wauling. Hoity toity; who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! What shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me. (*Speaks aloud to* Eustace.) Upon my word, Sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the Justice was at home; he is just stepp'd into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return—(*pretends to see the Justice*)—O! Sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your lac'd hat.

Mrs. Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right?—Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wise-acre!

Mrs. Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confess what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me: I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eust. Yes, Sir, that's my profession.

Mrs Deb. It's a lye, young man; it's a lye. Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What then, you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs. Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

J. Wood. He does not look! ha! ha! ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like, then? But I suppose you mean, he is not dressed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper too—Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen, now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation—Where do you live?

Mrs. Deb. It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs. Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You shan't say a word to him, you shan't say a word to him.

Mrs. Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom?

J. Wood. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs. Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs. Nimble Chops?

I suppose the man has a tongue in his head to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs. Deb. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay: but, remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair: for, through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with, before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs. Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, madam, you must think me very coming, indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl: her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron-string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs. Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were.

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus, and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.

How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

SCENE III.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy, send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature, does she think I want to be directed by her?—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerable honest.

Eust. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived, I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.——You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us, a droll fish! but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

When I followed a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips and held her fast:
When hugg'd and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd;
But, though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleas'd her so well that she bore it again:
Then hoity, toity,
Whisking, and frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Eust. Very well, Sir, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them once;—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and shew him what you can do—I must go and give some orders; *then hoity, toity,* &c.

SCENE IV.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant; hah, hah, hah! was ever so

whimsical an accident? Well, sir, what do think of this? 190

Eust. Think of it! I am in a maze.

Luc. O your aukwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth. 199

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no inclination for a husband; and let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he hath invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eust. Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good bye to you? No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Luc. Ah, childish!
Eust. My angel! 219

AIR.

Eust. *Let rakes and libertines, resign'd*
To sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.

Luc. *Let vain coquets and prudes conceal*
What most their hearts desire;
With pride my passion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.

Both. *The sun shall cease to spread its light,*
The stars their orbits leave,
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive.

SCENE V.

A Garden.

Enter ROSSETTA, *musing.*

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head; and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well but sure-

ly I am not in love: let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? what was it to me?—Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: Oh! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank:—And now, let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied. 251

AIR.

How bless'd the maid, whose bosom
No head-strong passion knows;
Her days in joy she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From ev'ry object flows. 260

SCENE VI.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Y. Mea. Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rossetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Y. Mea. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that; in short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR.

In vain, I ev'ry art essay,
To pluck the venom'd shaft away,
That rankles in my heart:
Deep in the centre fix'd and bound—
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart. 179

Ros. Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Y. Mea. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Y. Mea. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! indeed I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Y. Mea. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all. 291

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you wou'd never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly; I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted— 301

Y. Mea. Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rossetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it—I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Y. Mea. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Y. Mea. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another? 311

Ros. I am very willing.

Y. Mea. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Y. Mea. Why, I believe it is—Well, Mrs. Rossetta——

AIR.

Ros. *Begone——I agree*
From this moment we're free:
Already the matter I've sworn:
Y. Mea. *Yet let me complain*
Of the fates that ordain—
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. *When things are not fit,*
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:
Y. Mea. *Then thus I obey,*
Tear you image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. Well, now, I think, I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Y. Mea. Hold, Mrs. Rossetta, pray stay a moment—The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make

of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

Y. Mea. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly—.Mrs. Rossetta—[*starting back.*]—Pox on it, yonder's the Justice come into the garden!

Ros. O Lord! he will walk round this way; pray go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Y. Mea. The devil take him: he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Y. Mea. This evening, in the green-house, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Y. Mea. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Y. Mea. You'll come then?

Ros. I don't know, perhaps I may.

Y. Mea. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies promising; I may break my promise—but, I tell you, I will.

Y. Mea. Enough—Yet, before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man

loved woman; and that when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

Oh! how shall I, in language weak,
My ardent passion tell;
Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak,
That cruel word, Farewel?
Farewel—but know, tho' thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay.

SCENE VII.

ROSSETTA, JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well—

J. Wood. Hem! hem! Rossetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, Sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, Sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here: come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rossetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O sir! you are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Rossetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true-lovers knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants hall, with the smoak of a candle; and I suspect——

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir—No, sir; I am of another guess mind, I assure you; for, I have heard say, men are false and fickle——

J. Wood. Ay, that's your flanting, idle, young fellows; so they are: and they are so damn'd impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, Sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman—about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of three-score with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, Sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial, winter cough—and

I should not like him the worse—if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Rossetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, Sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but Rossetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, Sir?

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know, well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider "my soul; would you have "me endanger my soul?

J. Wood. "No, no—Repent.

Ros. "Besides, Sir, consider," what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man——

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

J. Wood. Right; it's quite a different thing—— Well, shall we, Rossetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, Sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Wou'd you hurt a harmless maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind Sir, I pray.

Men too often we believe:
And, should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart wou'd break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any harm.

Ros. Won't you, Sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But won't you indeed, Sir?

J. Wood. Why I tell you I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hussy, Hussy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!—Your servant, Sir, your servant.

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious—

SCENE VIII.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN!

Haw. So, so, justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps!—Your servant, sir.

J. Wood. Haw: friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a sallad—But come hither, master Hawthorn,

and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, Sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a sallad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

AIR.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.

No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power, resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl——under the rose.

J. Wood. I profess, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No, may be not: well, Sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J. Wood. A letter, and to me? [*taking the letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent, that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

SIR,

I am ashamed of giving you this trouble; but, I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom *is a little wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, though I am his father that say it.* Tom—oh, this is *Thomas*, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Haw. Well, well, Sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here:—*I am come in quest of my run-away, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice* (Whoever this person is, he understands good manners). *I beg leave to wait on you, Sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.*

WILLIAM MEADOWS.

I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter.

Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider—Meadows—by dad I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, sometime ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted: and, if you please, Sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, master Hawthorn, do so——But, pray what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year, to be a conjuror; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children.

J. Wood. No doubt of it, master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some mynx, against his father's consent—Why Sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay between

you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

My Dolly *was the fairest thing!*
Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you wou'd seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type:
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

Haw. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me, young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

SCENE IX.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *Hall.*

HODGE, MARGERY.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?
Mar. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first—What does the wench stand for?

Mar. I want to know if his worship's at home.

Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Mar. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer. 581

Hodge. You won't.

Mar. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Mar. Yes that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier. 590

Hodge. There's the door; take a friend's advice and go about your business.

Mar. My business is with his worship; and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you be gone?

Mar. I won't.

Hodge. Here Towzer, [*whistling.*] whu, whu, whu.

AIR.

Was ever poor fellow so plagu'd with a vixen?
Zawns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls and be trudging away:
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
S'blood, must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
May hap you may think me an ass;
But to the contrary you'll find:
A fine piece of work by the mass!

SCENE X.

ROSSETTA, HODGE, MARGERY.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine, and, if I mistake not, a rival—I'll have some sport with them—how now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs. Rossetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship—Madge follow me.

Mar. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam; but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear

a skin too, tho'f I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Mar. No, I'll speak if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why nothing I tell you;—Madge—

Mar. Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Mar. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company, but all the girls about say, there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Mar. You're a nasty monkey, you are parjur'd, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Mar. Do; strike me;—you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off——

Never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means—I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye.

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me!—Oh man, man—you are all alike—A bumkin here, bred at the barn-door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious; shew me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can out-do him.

AIR.

Cease, gay seducer, pride to take,
In triumphs o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake,
As those in higher sphere.

Where then to shun a shameful fate
Shall helpless beauty go?
In ev'ry rank, in ev'ry state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

SCENE XI.

ROSSETTA, MARGERY.

Mar. I am ready to burst, I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child, come hither.

Mar. Don't speak to me, don't you.

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage.

Mar. Ay, or he should never have prevail'd upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robb'd her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Mar. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways and be a good girl.

Mar. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him

herself; well let her, who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to the town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend;
Folks say in her silks she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do?

SCENE XII.

Enter ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA.

Ros. Ha! ha! ha! Oh admirable, most delectably ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone thro'

half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night.

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excess of the heart:

If ought of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.

SCENE XIII.

ROSSETTA, LUCINDA, HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, sir.

Ros. Mr. Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What my little water-wagtail!—The very couple I wish'd to meet: come hither both of you.

Ros. Now, Sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little—have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young batchelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistress or maid——

Ross. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can assure you, Mr. Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, Sir.

Haw. Indeed!

AIR.

Well come, let us hear what the swain must possess
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

Ros. *He must be first of all*
Straight, comely, and tall:
Luc. *Neither aukward,*
Ros. *Nor foolish,*
Luc. *Nor apish,*
Ros. *Nor mulish;*
Luc. } *Nor yet should his fortune be small.*
Ros. }
Haw. *What think'st of a captain?*
Luc. *All bluster and wounds!*
Haw. *What think'st of a 'squire?*
Ros. *To be left for his hounds.*

Luc. } *The youth that is form'd to my mind,*
Must be gentle, obliging and kind;
Of all things in nature love me;
Ros. } *Have sense both to speak and to see—*
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.

Haw. } *'Fore George a most rare matrimonial receipt;*
Ros. } *Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;*
Luc. } *Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'*s house. Enter Sir* WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir William.

WELL, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha! ha! ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw? that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly— 11

Haw. Why, Sir William, it is a romance; a novel; a pleasanter history by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country. 19

Sir Will. But what pleases me best of all, master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and

the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; 'till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: Indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown grey-hound.

Haw. Well, Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him.—He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment, she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir Will. With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart, do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, Sir William, I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets: but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

The world is a well furnish'd table,
Where guests are promisc'ously set;
We all fare as well as were able,
And scramble for what we can get,
My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast. 59

SCENE II.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes.—

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocksbones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her—But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus as a body may say. 72

Ros. Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened, has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir Will. Is not she a neat wench, master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is—But you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously, Sir: since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
Can value to the soul convey;
Minds possess superior worth,
Which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
Like the sun true Merit shews;
By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames he nobly glows,
Nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

Haw. Well, but, Sir, we lose time—is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it. 111

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along, and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir Will. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

SCENE III.

ROSSETTA, HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the business?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me? 119

Hodge. Mrs Rossetta!

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you be'nt dizen'd this way to go to the statute dance presently, be you?

Ros. Have patience and you'll see:—but is there any thing amiss that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why there's ruination.

Ros. How?—where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she and the gentleman above stairs, and overheard all their love discourse.

Ros. You don't say so!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have pop'd in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and run down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship! no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda, I wish I could go up to her, but I am so engaged with my own affairs——

Hodge. Mistress Rossetta.

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.

Ros. Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy, there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha, ha, ha—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

The traveller benighted,
And led thro' weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past.

SCENE IV.

HODGE, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA.

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. (within) Well, but dear, dear aunt——

Mrs. Deb. (within) You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod I'll

get out of the way--Murrain take it, this door is bolted now—So, so. 172

Mrs. Deb. Get along, get along; *(Driving in Lucinda before her)* you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. What shall I do?

Mrs. Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and please the fates there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Luc. You won't be so cruel, I am sure you won't: I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth. 189

Mrs. Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not over-hear your scheme of running away to-night, thro' the partition? did not I find the very bundles pack'd up in the room with you ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, tho' your father says I am a fool, but now we'll be judged who is the greatest.—And you, Mr. Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs. Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who, me, madam!

Mrs. Deb. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship—

Mrs. Deb. Go, go, you are a villain, hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young, and inexperienced as I am.

AIR.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest,
Reflect with a little compassion,
On the soft pangs, which prevail'd in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me thus torn and distrest?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Wou'd I, how cou'd I, refuse his request?
Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love,

Mrs. Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments, we worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in tent stitch; four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the creed and the ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was fram'd and glaz'd, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well, pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

Mrs. Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child, now let's see what the wits will think of themselves—Don't hold me— 251

Luc. I'm not going;—I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

SCENE V.

HODGE.

Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't—So here's a fine job—But what can they do to me—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings:—The worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase—indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs. Rossetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life—But that's the way of them all. 262

A plague on those wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho' he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:

You cannot persuade 'em
'Till promise you've made 'em;
And after they've got it,
They tell you—— add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone:
Then to be sure, Sir,
There is but one cure, Sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

SCENE VI.

A Greenhouse.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unweildy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more.—I wonder this girl does not come [*looking at his watch*]: perhaps she won't come ——Why then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.

The casket, where, to outward shew,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valu'd, when we know
It holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

SCENE VII.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS *and* HAWTHORN.

Y. Mea. Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir Will. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Y. Mea. Forgive me, Sir; I own I have been in a fault.

Sir Will. In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Mr. Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England? and the rascal run away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of Botany,

as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Haw. No, Sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Y. Mea. I am so astonished to see you here, Sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, Sir, how did you find me out?

Sir Will. No matter, Tom, no matter: it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony; do you think you could digest a wife now?

Y. Mea. Pray, Sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.

Sir Will. Is not this mighty provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Y. Mea. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but at present, I am not disposed——

Haw. Nay, but young gentleman, fair and softly, you should pay some repect to your father in this matter.

Sir Will. Respect, master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once.

Look you Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Y. Mea. Have you brought the lady here, Sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir Will. Why sorry? what then you won't marry her? we'll see that! Pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in.——Ay, Sir, you may fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please, but marry whip me, I'm resolv'd. 352

SCENE VIII.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, Sir William.

Sir Will. Come in, madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, Sir, walk this way. 359

Y. Mea. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir Will. How, Tom, how!

Y. Mea. I was determined, Sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir Will. And pray, Sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Y. Mea. To a person, Sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her: but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, Sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir Will. Not I, not in the least: go about your business.

Y. Mea. Sir, I obey.

Haw. *Now, madam, is the time.*

[*Rossetta advances, Young Meadows turns round and sees her.*]

AIR.

Ros. "*When we see a lover languish,*
"*And his truth and honour prove,*
"*Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,*
"*And repay him love for love.*"

Sir Will. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

Haw. Perhaps, Sir William, your son does not like the lady; and if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Y. Mea. You need not have taken this method, Sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir Will. Well, but Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Y.. Mea, Your consent, Sir?

" *Ros.* Come, Sir William, we have carried the jest " far enough; I see your son is in a kind of embar- " rassment, and I don't wonder at it; but this letter, " which I received from him a few days before I left " my father's house, will, I apprehend, expound the " riddle. He cannot be surprised that I ran away " from a gentleman who expressed so much dislike " to me; and what has happened, since chance has " brought us together in masquerade, there is no oc- " casion for me to inform him of."

" *Y. Mea.*" What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

Y. Mea. Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another 'tis plain.

Y. Mea. I know not, Madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir Will. Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Y. Mea. Nay, dear Sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir Will. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Y. Mea. Then, Sir, I am the happiest man in the world; I enquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

AIR.

Y. Mea. *All I wish in her obtaining,*
Fortune can no more impart:
Ros. *Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,*
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Y. Mea. *Joy and pleasure never ceasing,*
Ros. *Love with length of years increasing.*
Together. *Thus my heart and hand surrender,*
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright.

Haw. Give you joy, Sir; and you, fair lady—— And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Y. Mea. And may I believe this?—Pr'ythee tell me, dear Rossetta.

Ros. Step into the house and I'll tell you every thing—I must intreat the good offices of Sir William

and Mr. Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know, but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances; however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover——

Haw. The music master! I thought so.

Sir Will. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to shew the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come, children, go before us.

Haw. Thank you, Sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR.

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys,
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the Cockneys *they fleece,*
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And shew me for two-pence a piece.

SCENE IX.

Justice WOODCOCK's *Hall.*

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEB. WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, HODGE.

Mrs. Deb. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs. Deb. I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence—Hark'e, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs. Deb. What then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor over-hear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up—

Eust. Ha, ha, ha.

Luc. Why aunt, you rave.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last;

and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Mrs. Deb. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too! Take that. [*boxes him.*]

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself; you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs. Deb. I tipsy, brother!—I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little anniseed water, when I have got the cholic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ach all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is; this is a lye of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

SCENE X.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Bless me, Sir! look who is yonder.

Sir. Will. Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky—— Sir William, your servant.

Sir Will. Your servant again, and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

J. Wood. Pray, Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir. Will. What, with Jack Eustace! why he's my kinsman: his mother and I was cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow, may I never do an ill turn if I tell a word of a lye.

J. Wood. Well, but Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a musick-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir. Will. What Jack Eustace a musick-master! no, no, I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer;—What that gentleman tells you is very true, Sir; I am no musick-master indeed.

J. Wood. You are not, you own it then?

Eust. Nay, more, Sir, I am, as this lady has represented me [*Pointing to Mrs. Deborah*], your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I ex-

pect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs. Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken! Oh I am ashamed of you, but you are a weak man, and it can't be help'd; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir Will. Ay, do, Sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship.—Come, my dear Sir, tho' you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault—You know what I mean.——Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections——What, not a word!

AIR.

Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had try'd you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.

But here I charge you—Make them happy;
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:
Come be a dear good natur'd pappy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.

Mrs. Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it, he's a justice of peace;—turn out of the house, I say:——

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house—he shall stay where he is.

Mrs. Deb. He shan't marry my neice.

J. Wood. Shan't he? but I'll shew you the difference now, I say, he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs. Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs. Deb. Why I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, Madam, all's very well, and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

Eust. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Ros. Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart upon this occasion——

Luc. Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pretenders to friendship; only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.

Y. Mea. Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd circumstances—but here has been the strangest business between this lady and me——

Hodge. What then, Mrs. Rossetta, are you turned false-hearted after all; will you marry Thomas the gardener; and did I forsake Madge for this?

Ros. Oh lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must reconcile you and Madge, I think, and give you a wedding-dinner to make you amends.

Hodge. N—ah.

Haw. Adds me, Sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to make up the company of your statute-ball; yonder's musick too I see; shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bless you both, children, I say—Sister Deborah, you are a fool.

Mrs. Deb. You are a fool, brother; and mark my words——But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Haw. Fiddlers strike up.

AIR

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Ev'ry grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty——
May they long in triumph reign.

TABLE OF THE SONGS,

With the NAMES *of the several* COMPOSERS.

N. B. Those marked thus * were composed on purpose for this Opera.

A New Overture by Mr. Abel.

ACT I.

HOPE, thou nurse of young desire,	Mr. Weldon
Whence can you inherit	Abos
My heart's my own, my will is free	Arne
When once love's subtile poison gains	Arne
*Oh had I been by Fate decreed	Howard
Gentle youth, ah tell me why	Arne
*Still in hopes to get the better	Arne
There was a jolly miller once	
Let gay ones and great	Baildon
The honest heart whose thoughts are free	Festing
Well, well, say no more	*Larry Gorgan*
Cupid, god of soft persuasion	Giardini

How happy were my days till now — Arne
A medley

ACT II.

We women like weak Indians trade — Paradies
Think my fairest, how delay — Arne
* Believe me, dear aunt — Arne
When I follow'd a lass that was froward and shy
Let rakes and libertines resign'd — Handel
How blest the maid whose bosom — Gallupi
In vain I every art assay — Arne
Begone, I agree — Arne
Oh how shall I in language weak — Cary
Young I am, and sore afraid — Gallupi
Oons, neighbour, ne'er blush — Arne
My Dolly was the fairest thing — Handel
Was ever poor fellow — Agus
Cease, gay seducers, pride to take — Arne
Since Hodge proves ungrateful — Arne
In love should there meet a fond pair — Bernard
* Well come let us hear

ACT III.

The world is a well furnish'd table — Arne
It is not wealth, it is not birth — Giardini
* The traveller benighted — Arne
If ever a fond inclination — Geminiani

Plague o'these wenches, &c.	*St. Patrick's Day*
*How much superior beauty awes	Howard
When we see a lover languish	Arne
All I wish in her obtaining	Arne
If ever I'm catch'd in those regions	Boyce
*Go, naughty man, I can't abide you	Arne
Hence with cares	Boyce

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Bickerstaffe, Isaac

Love in a village a comic opera

London 1791
Res/P.o.angl. 432-22#Beibd.3
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10923682-1